A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

Findings from
A Programmatic Assessment

of the

Office of Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)
Division of Family Services

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A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

Prepared by
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- Programmatic Assessment Background
  - Purpose of Assessment
  - Scope of the Assessment
  - Project Strategy

- Findings
  - from State ICPC Programmatic Assessment
  - from Key Process Review
  - from the Stakeholder Input
  - from the Best Practice Interviews

- VIA/EMC Proposed Improvement Projects
  - Summary

- Expected Outcomes with Improvement Project Implementation

- Conclusion

A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

Purpose of Assessment

- Prepare comprehensive audit of ICPC
- Describe inputs, operations, and outcomes
- Identify key issues/concerns
- Propose improvement projects

Outcome Goal:
With implementation of improvement projects,
enhance ICPC operations and management

A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

Overview of Assessment Approach

Vision:	
Mission:	
Strategic Plan:	

ALIGNMENT	Inputs	Process	Outcomes/Impacts Short-term & Long-term	ALIGNMENT
	• Budget • Staff • Equipment • Information Technology • Work Space • Training • Court Orders	Organizational Structure • Current and Representative Project Change For all Key Functions/Processes • Description of work flow and organization • Availability/communication of written policies, procedures or standards • Meets customer expectations • Alignment with mission statement • Alignment with strategic plan and objectives • Alignment with standards, policies, procedures (requirements) • Recent initiatives • Customer focus/Citizen involvement	• Products & Services • Internal/External • Quality Assurance Activities • Customer Satisfaction • Listening Posts/ Feedback • Citizen Involvement	

A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

Scope of the Assessment

- Conduct Programmatic Assessment of ICPC Program, to prepare profile of:

  - Inputs
  - Processes
  - Outcomes

- Obtain Stakeholder Input
  - Best Things About ICPC program
  - Areas for Improvement

- Conduct Best Practice Interviews, to obtain input on key topics where input is needed
  - Governing structure
  - Staffing levels/process
  - Filing systems
  - Training resources
  - Information system
  - Quality assurance

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Project Strategy

- State Focused ICPC Review
    - One-on-one interviews
        - Director, Division of Family Services
        - Program Mgr, ICPC
        - All ICPC staff
        - Director, Foster Care program
        - Director, Adoption program

    - ICPC Staff Group Session

    - Document Review

- Obtain Stakeholder Input
    - Interview Virginia Local Offices

- Conduct Best Practice Interviews of 4 States
    - Maryland
    - Minnesota
    - New York
    - North Carolina

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Findings from State ICPC Programmatic Assessment

Findings from State ICPC Programmatic Assessment

Policy and Procedures

- Regulations must be completed
- A formal ICPC policies and procedures manual is needed/integrated with P&P manual for Permanency Unit
- The policy and procedure manual targeted to local agencies is outdated

Business Planning

- A Business/Strategic Plan is needed

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Findings from State ICPC Programmatic Assessment

Training for ICPC Staff

- There is no formal training plan
- Training requires an inordinate amount of staff effort.
  - ICPC office
  - Local DSS office staff and judges
- Training is not standardized
- Staff do not regularly attend APHSA conference
- Funding of training is unavailable

Training for Local Office Staff

- Local office staff have not received formal training in 2 years
- The one-to-one training and technical assistance requires tremendous staff effort/resources
- One-on-one training approach leads to un-standardized interpretation/understanding of information

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Findings from State ICPC Programmatic Assessment

Information Technology

- ARRIS must be enhanced/a requirements analysis is needed
- An OASIS and ARRIS interface needs to be established/utilized
- The ICPC unit should use the phone system used by the CPS/APS Hotline to track calls

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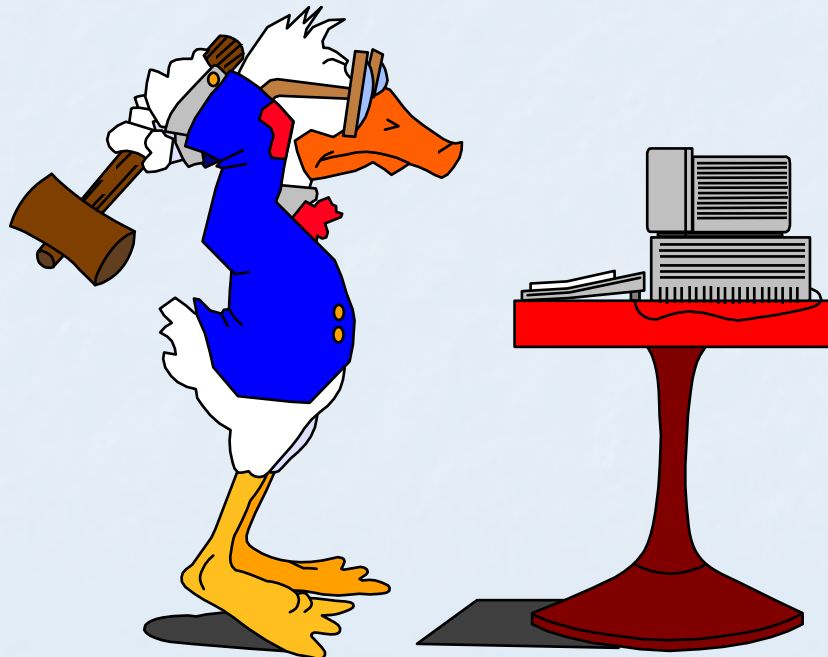
Findings from State ICPC Programmatic Assessment

Reporting Requirements

- There are no formal reports to monitor workload, productivity, and quality of service
- Reports generated from ARRIS yield conflicting data—must reexamine rules behind template reports; establish rules for new reports

Customer Service

- ICPC staff must take the lead in addressing/monitoring complaints
- There is no customer feedback process

Quality Assurance/Performance Monitoring

- There is no QA plan is needed
  - Need an implementation plan to guide improvement projects
  - Needs QA performance indicators to monitor performance

Virginia Department of
social services
Division of Family Services

Figure 2

A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

ICPC--14 Key Processes

Internally Oriented

- Mail Processing System (Figure 3)
- New Case Assignments (Figure 4)
- Program Specialists Case Management (Figure 5)
- Progress Reports/Home Study Report Processing
- Case Filing System (Figure 6)
- Information Technology Systems
- Case Backlog Activity
- Policy & Procedure Development/ Regulations
- Communications
- ICPC Staff Training

Externally Oriented

- Training for External Stakeholders

Outcomes

- Customer Service
- Reporting Requirements
- Quality Assurance/ Performance Monitoring

Figure 3

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A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

Mail Processing System

Mail Room Delivers Mail to Support Staff
Faxes, FedExp, Special Deliveries
(Responsibility rotated among 3 individuals)

Support Person 1 — Support Person 2 — Support Person 3

Mail Opened—Case Identified

New Case/100A — Documentation for Existing Case

Case Assigned to Pgm Specialist

Case # Identified

File cannot be found

Cover Sheet Info Entered into ARRIS

Program Specialist Identified in ARRIS

Doc Put in Bin for "Unmatched Mail"

Case File/Mail Given to Program Specialist

13

Figure 4

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New Case Assignments

Next in Line to Receive Case?		Expertise?

Agency Adoption?

Private Adoption?

Parental Adoption?

Foster Care?

Residential Treatment Centers?

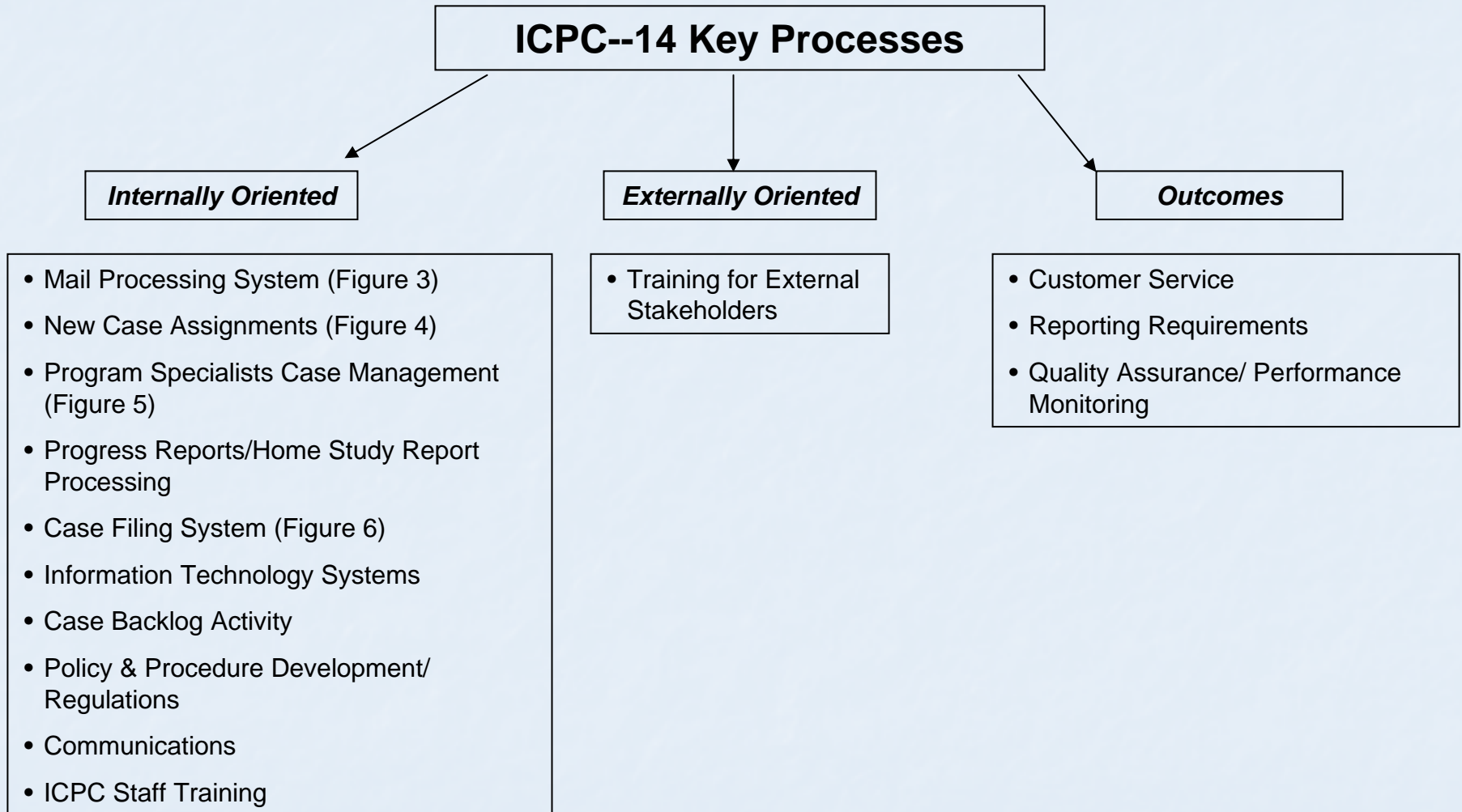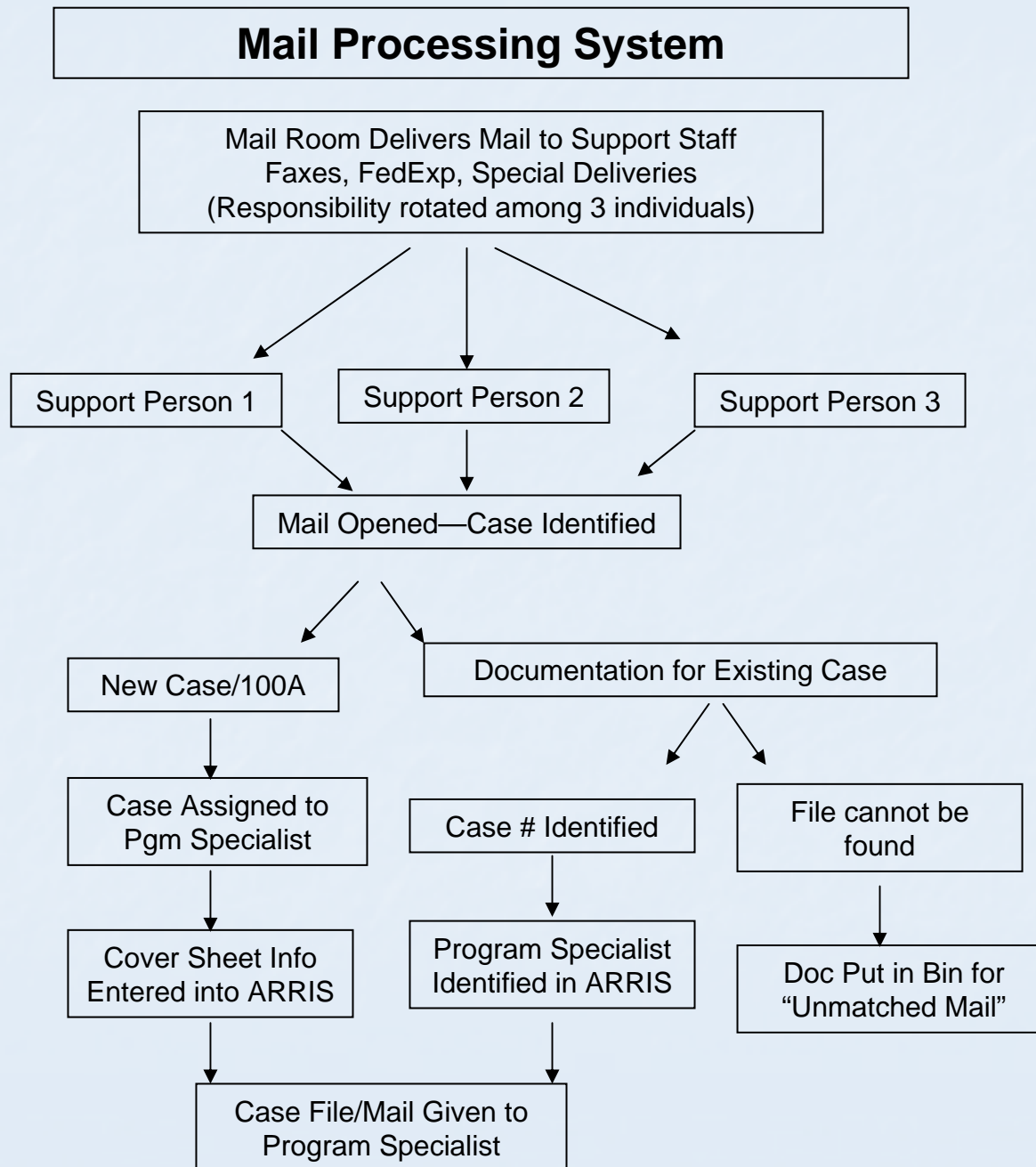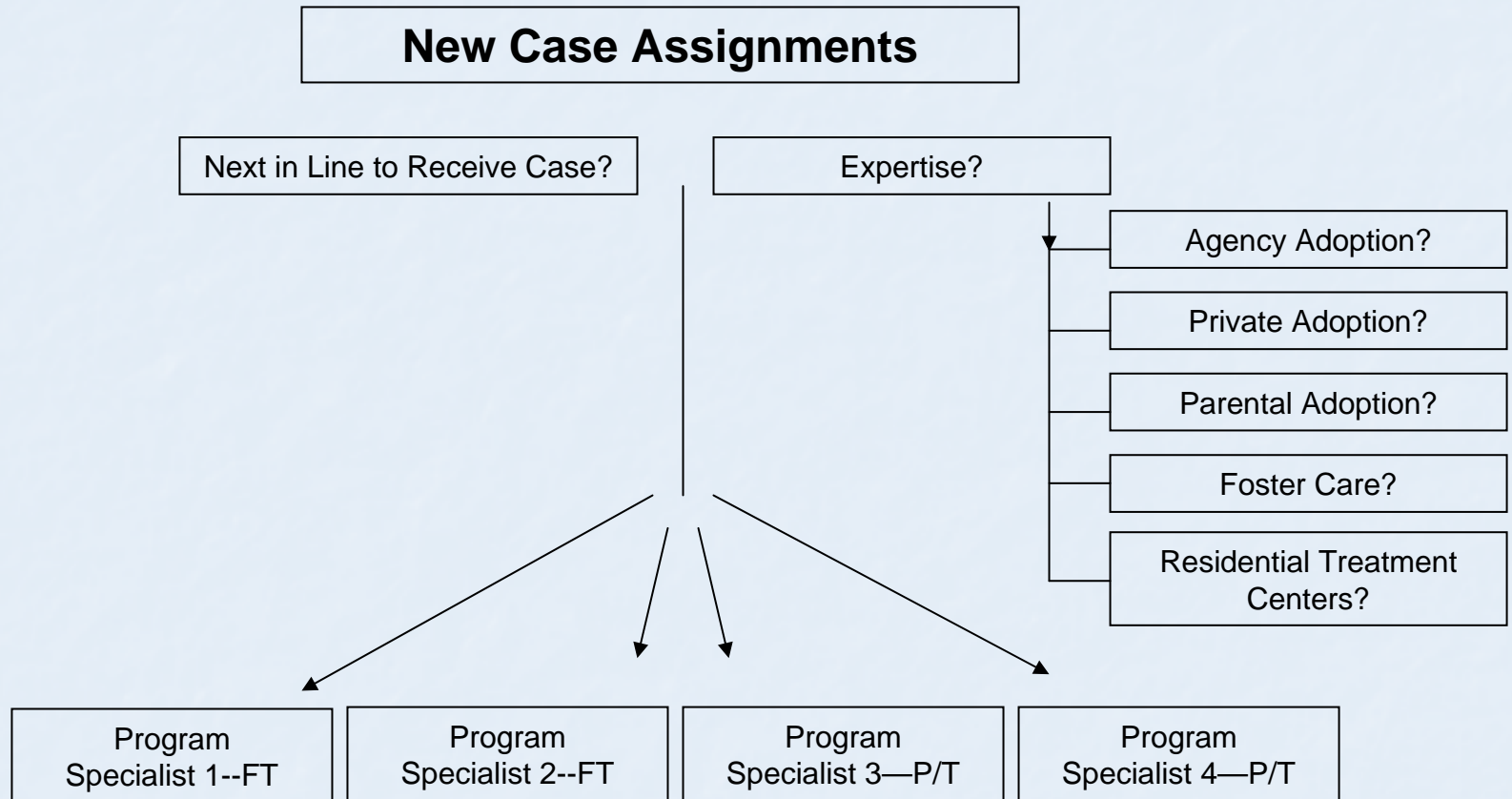| Program Specialist 1--FT	Program Specialist 2--FT	Program Specialist 3—P/T	Program Specialist 4—P/T

A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

Findings: VA ICPC Key Process Issues

Case Assignment

Process Issues

- A true round robin approach to case assignment does not exist.
    - Program specialists differ in their area of expertise and are therefore targeted to receive certain types of cases.
- Part-time program specialists have an equal chance of getting a case as full-time staff. Their shorter work schedule means that they are unable to address cases on a timely basis.
- Round robin approach to case assignment does not result in equitable distribution of work. Simply counting cases does not accurately reflect the level of effort involved in a given case.

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Findings: VA ICPC Key Process Issues

Case Assignment

- No system currently in place accurately measures workload and productivity.

- Staff report being overly overworked, and indicate that productivity is achieved at a cost to workers (for example, they do not have time to take breaks and they often eat lunch at their desks).

- A backlog of cases exists that specialists do not have time to address

- A staff backup plan does not exist.

- A contingency plan is needed that addresses the process for work distribution when staff are absent, on leave, or resign. In the absence of backup staff, cases continue to be assigned to individuals even when out. Workload piles up in such situations, and cases become backlogged. The current backlog is clearly further compounded.

Figure 5

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Program Specialists Case Management

New Cases

Reviews 100A Face Sheet data entered by support staff

↓

Reviews cover letter to understand case

↓

Reviews files to assess file completion

↓

Enters relevant data/information into ARRIS

↓

Prints Transmittal to Request Additional/Missing Information
or
Communicates by phone with Sender to request missing Information

Active Cases

Receives Docs Requested from VA Local Offices

↓

Reviews information to assess completion

↓

Approves Placement

↓

Forwards approved docs to sending/receiving state

Receives Progress Reports

| From Receiving State | From VA Local Offices |

↓

Receives and reviews progress reports going out of state

↓

Prints Transmittal to Request Additional/Missing Information/Revisions

↓

Approves

| Sends to VA Local Offices | Sends to Sending State |

Figure 6

A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

Case Filing Process

Current Cases

Closed Cases

Vault—closed files

Support #1
- Desk
- Incoming mail space

Support #2
- Desk
- Incoming mail space

Support #3
- Desk
- Incoming mail space

Centralized File Areas

- Black box—unmatched mail
- Support staff 2 drawer lateral file cabinet—for cases that need to be filed/overflow drawer
- Close chart file cabinet—for cases to be filed in vault

- Pines File Cabinet
- File Retriever—Active cases w/no outstanding documentation

Specialist #1
- Rolling File Cabinet—current cases
- Short File Cabinet
- Desk
- Desk Drawer
- Tall Lateral File Cabinets--Backlog

Specialist #2
- Rolling File Cabinet—current cases
- Short File Cabinet
- Desk
- Desk Drawer
- Tall Lateral File Cabinets--Backlog

Specialist #3
- Rolling File Cabinet—current cases
- Short File Cabinet
- Desk
- Desk Drawer
- Tall Lateral File Cabinets--Backlog

Specialist #4
- Rolling File Cabinet—current cases
- Short File Cabinet
- Desk
- Desk Drawer
- Tall Lateral File Cabinets--Backlog

Pgm Mgr
- Rolling File Cabinet—current cases
- Short File Cabinet
- Desk
- Desk Drawer
- Tall Lateral File Cabinets--Backlog

Findings from Best Practice Interviews

- Conduct Best Practice Interviews of 4 States
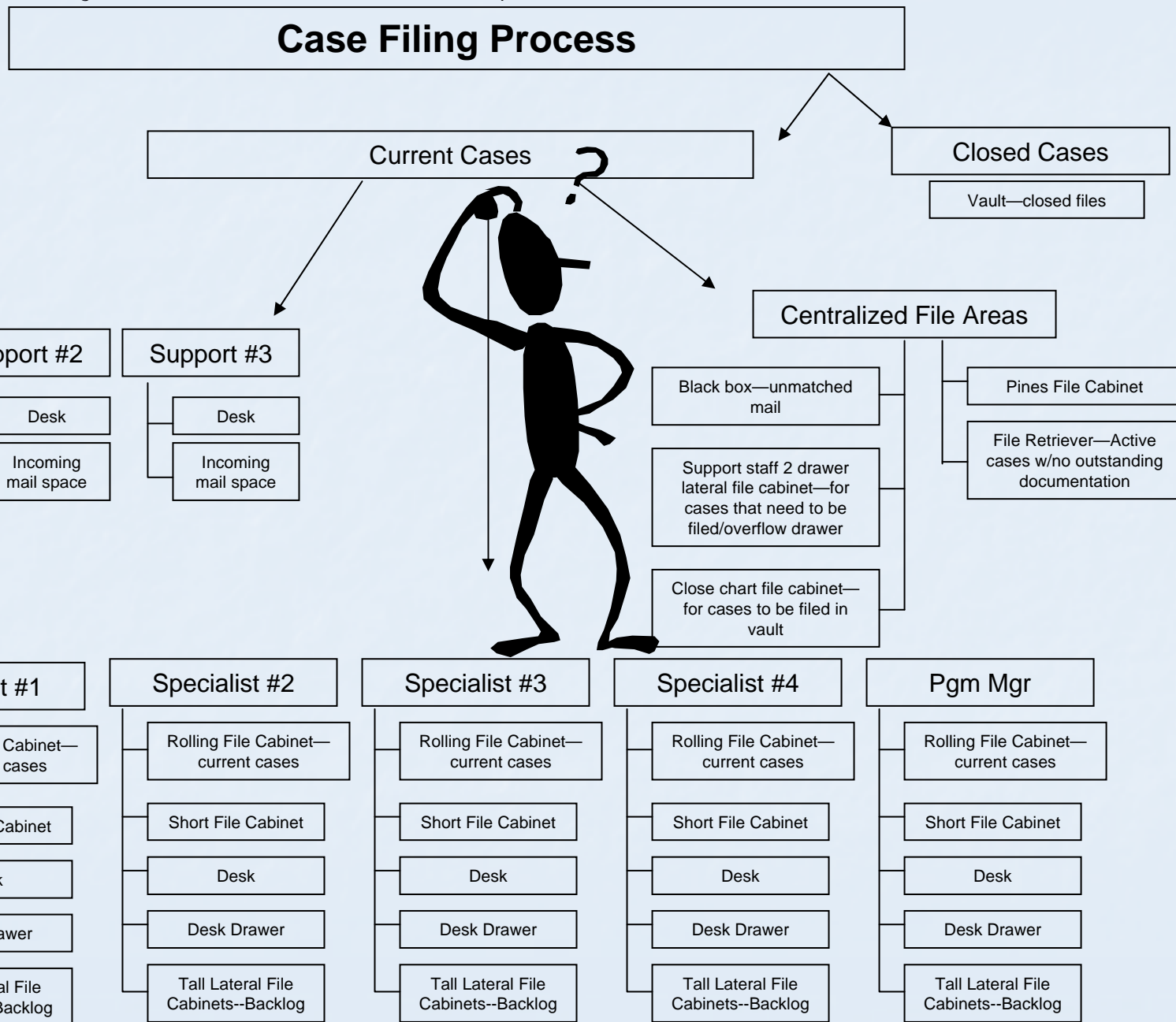   - Maryland
    - Minnesota
    - New York
    - North Carolina

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Summary Findings from Best Practice Interviews

- Governance--varies among State

- Staffing—levels similar to VA; all have full-time employees, experience little turnover; legal resource available to ICPC staff

- Filing Systems—centralized system. No problem in losing files

- Case Assignments—varied. Assigned by counties or last name of child.

- Caseloads—similar to VA—about 800 to 1,000 cases per work

- Case Backlog—none. Assign temporary resources to minimize backlog

- Quality assurance—none had a QA plan

- Training for Local Offices—all provided training on a regular basis. No CBT modules.

- Information Technology—all implementing enhancements; one uses APHSA system and is happy with it.

- Mail Processing—a support staff responsibility; dedicated staff, no revolving of responsibility.

- Case Counting—uncertainty was clear in discussions; some count children, some count resources. All agree, does not measure workload

VIA/EMC Proposed Improvement Projects

VIA/EMC Proposed Improvement Projects

- Mail processing

- Workload/case distribution/Establish workload management system

  - Revisit case management activities/priority areas

  - The filing system

  - Resolve case backlog problem

- Conduct IT Requirements Analysis/Enhance Info System

  - Establish formal reporting system

- Establish a formalize policy and procedure manual/finalize state regulations

- Formalize training for staff

  - Reinstate regional training programs

- Develop QA Plan

A Programmatic Assessment of the Interstate Compact on the Protection of Children (ICPC)

At the end of the day, we want...

an enhanced ICPC program office

- Timely placement of children
- Efficient and effective functioning
- Quality service
- Satisfied employees
- Improved customer service
- Compliance with ICPC regulations and requirements